

In the Claims:

Cancel Claim 26, add Claims 39-40, and amend Claims 27-29, 31, 32, 34 and 36-38.

1-26. (Cancelled).

27. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein the first projections essentially have the shape of a spherical segment.

28. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein at least one of the second and third projections have a shape of one of a flat square prism and a frustum.

29. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein at least one of the second and third projections have a shape of one of spherical segment, flat truncated cone, and flat cylinder.

30. (Previously presented) A floor covering according to Claim 28, wherein the second projections have the shape of the one of a square prism and a frustum with rounded edges and rounded areas adjoining underside of the covering and extending to a plane of the floor covering, and the third projections have the shape of a spherical segment.

31. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein a distance between opposite edges of each of the second projections correspond to at least a distance between adjacent second projections.
32. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein a distance between opposite edges of each of the third projections is less than a distance between adjacent third projections.
33. (Previously presented) A floor covering according to Claim 32, wherein the distance between the opposite edges each of third projections is less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the distance between the adjacent third projections.
34. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein grid sizes of arrangements of the first and second projections essentially correspond, and a grid size of the third projections corresponds to the grid size of the arrangements of the first and second projections or a multiple thereof.
35. (Canceled).
36. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein a height of the first projections is less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of a largest dimension thereof in a covering plane and a height of at least one of a second and third

projections is in a range of between $\frac{1}{5}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ of a dimension thereof in a plane of the floor covering.

37. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, further comprising at least one of perforations provided between the first and second projections and recesses formed in the underside.

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38. (Currently amended) A floor covering according to Claim ~~26~~ 39, wherein at least one of the perforations and the recesses have one of a circular cross-section and a cross-section of a segment.

39. (New). A floor covering made of an elastically deformable material, comprising an upper side; an underside; first projections regularly arranged on the upper side; second projections regularly arranged on the underside for supporting the floor covering on a floor, the first and second projections having no overlapping regions in a plane of the floor covering; and third projections provided on the underside, arranged between the second projections, and having, in an unstressed state of the floor covering, a height smaller than a height of the second projections, whereby the third projections provide for an additional support of the floor covering on the floor when a load applied to the floor covering exceeds a predetermined value, wherein the third projections have a load dependent increasing

characteristic line of rigidity whereby a progressive cushioning characteristic of the third projects is obtained.

40. (New). A floor covering according to Claim 39, wherein the first projections are formed by superimposition of two basic geometric forms including a larger spherical segment and a smaller spherical segment mounted on the larger spherical segment.

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